

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MARYLAND
NORTHERN DIVISION

| | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| Anita McCoy, | : | |
| | : | Civil Action No.: _____ |
| | : | |
| Plaintiff, | : | |
| v. | : | |
| | : | |
| Emerald Marketing Group, LLC; and DOES 1-10, inclusive, | : | COMPLAINT |
| | : | |
| | : | |
| Defendants. | : | |

For this Complaint, the Plaintiff, Anita McCoy, by undersigned counsel, states as follows:

JURISDICTION

1. This action arises out of Defendants' repeated violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692, et seq. ("FDCPA"), and the invasions of Plaintiff's personal privacy by the Defendants and their agents in their illegal efforts to collect a consumer debt.
2. Supplemental jurisdiction exists pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1337.
3. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331(b), in that the Defendants transact business in this District and a substantial portion of the acts giving rise to this action occurred in this District.

PARTIES

4. The Plaintiff, Anita McCoy ("Plaintiff"), is an adult individual residing in Towson, Maryland, and is a "consumer" as the term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).

5. The Defendant, (“Emerald Marketing Group, LLC”), is a business entity with an address of 1489 Warm Springs Road, Suite 110, Henderson, Nevada 89014, operating as a collection agency, and is a “debt collector” as the term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).

6. The Defendant has not obtained a license to operate as a debt collection agency as required to do so under MD. Ann. Code. Bus. Reg. § 7-301(a). The Defendant has not executed a surety bond as required to do so under MD. Ann. Code. Bus. Reg. § 7-304(a).

7. Does 1-10 (the “Collectors”) are individual collectors employed by Emerald Marketing whose identities are currently unknown to the Plaintiff. One or more of the Collectors may be joined as parties once their identities are disclosed through discovery.

8. Emerald Marketing Group, LLC at all times acted by and through one or more of the Collectors.

ALLEGATIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL COUNTS

A. The Debt

9. The Plaintiff incurred a financial obligation (the “Debt”) to a creditor (the “Creditor”).

10. The Debt arose from services provided by the Creditor which were primarily for family, personal or household purposes and which meets the definition of a “debt” under 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).

11. The Debt was purchased, assigned or transferred for collection, or was employed by the Creditor to collect the Debt.

12. The Defendants attempted to collect the Debt and, as such, engaged in “communications” as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(2).

B. Engages in Harassment and Abusive Tactics

13. The Defendants called the Plaintiff at her place of employment every day.
14. The Plaintiff feared that she would lose her job.
15. The Defendants falsely represented that they were an “investigator.”
16. The Defendants threatened to garnish the Plaintiff’s wages.
17. The Defendants threatened to arrest the Plaintiff.
18. The Defendants were very rude when speaking with the Plaintiff.
19. The Plaintiff requested that the Defendants cease calling her. Regardless, the Defendants continued the calls.

C. Plaintiff Suffered Actual Damages

20. The Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer actual damages as a result of the Defendant’s unlawful conduct.
21. As a direct consequence of the Defendant’s acts, practices and conduct, the Plaintiff suffered and continues to suffer from humiliation, anger, fear, frustration and embarrassment.
22. The Defendant’s conduct was so outrageous in character, and so extreme in degree, as to go beyond all possible bounds of decency, and to be regarded as atrocious, and utterly intolerable in a civilized community.

COUNT I

VIOLATIONS OF THE FDCPA 15 U.S.C. § 1692, ET SEQ.

23. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

24. The Defendant's conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692c(a)(3) in that Defendants contacted the Plaintiff at her place of employment, knowing that the Plaintiff's employer prohibited such communications.

25. The Defendant's conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692d(2) in that Defendants used profane and abusive language when speaking with the consumer.

26. The Defendant's conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692d(5) in that Defendant caused a phone to ring repeatedly and engaged the Plaintiff in telephone conversations, with the intent to annoy and harass.

27. The Defendant's conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(4) in that Defendants threatened the Plaintiff with garnishment if the Debt was not paid.

28. The Defendant's conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(4) in that Defendant threatened the Plaintiff with imprisonment if the Debt was not paid.

29. The Defendant's conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(10) in that Defendant employed false and deceptive means to collect a debt.

30. The Defendant's conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692j in that Defendant falsely designed, furnished and compiled a form that created a belief in the Plaintiff that a person or agency other than the Defendant was collecting the Debt.

31. The foregoing acts and omissions of the Defendant constitute numerous and multiple violations of the FDCPA, including every one of the above-cited provisions.

32. The Plaintiff is entitled to damages as a result of Defendant's violations.

COUNT II

VIOLATIONS OF THE MARYLAND CONSUMER DEBT COLLECTION ACT

MD. CODE COMM. LAW § 14-201, ET SEQ.

33. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

34. The Defendants are each individually a “collector” as defined under MD. Code Comm. Law § 14-201(b).

35. The debt is a “consumer transaction” as defined under MD. Code Comm. Law § 14-201(c).

36. The Defendant repeatedly contacted the Plaintiff with the intent to harass or abuse, in violation of MD. Code Comm. Law § 14-202(6).

37. The Defendant used obscene and grossly abusive language when communicating with the Plaintiff, in violation of MD. Code Comm. Law § 14-202(7).

38. The Plaintiff is entitled to damages proximately caused by the Defendant’s violations.

COUNT III

INVASION OF PRIVACY BY INTRUSION UPON SECLUSION

39. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

40. The *Restatement of Torts, Second*, § 652(b) defines intrusion upon seclusion as, “One who intentionally intrudes...upon the solitude or seclusion of another, or his private affairs or concerns, is subject to liability to the other for invasion of privacy, if the intrusion would be highly offensive to a reasonable person.”

41. Maryland further recognizes the Plaintiff's right to be free from invasions of privacy, thus Defendants violated Maryland state law.

42. The Defendants intentionally intruded upon Plaintiff's right to privacy by continually harassing the Plaintiff.

43. The Defendants engaged in harassment and abusive tactics by calling the Plaintiff at work every day, causing the Plaintiff to fear she could lose her job.

44. The telephone calls made by the Defendant to the Plaintiff were so persistent and repeated with such frequency as to be considered "hounding the plaintiff" and "a substantial burden to her existence," thus satisfying the *Restatement of Torts, Second*, § 652(b) requirement for an invasion of privacy.

45. The conduct of the Defendant in engaging in the illegal collection activities resulted in multiple invasions of privacy in such a way as would be considered highly offensive to a reasonable person.

46. As a result of the intrusions and invasions, the Plaintiff is entitled to actual damages in an amount to be determined at trial from the Defendant.

COUNT IV

VIOLATION OF LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR COLLECTION AGENCIES

MD. ANN. CODE BUS. REG. § 7-101 ET SEQ.

47. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

48. The Defendants are a "collection agency" as defined by Md. Ann. Code. Bus. Reg. § 7-101(c).

49. As a collection agency doing business within the state of Maryland, the Defendant

is required to obtain a license under MD. Ann. Code. Bus. Reg. § 7-301(a) and to execute a surety bond under MD. Ann. Code. Bus. Reg. § 7-304(a).

50. The Defendant is not in good standing and its license status is marked “forfeited” for “failure to file property return for 2008,” as indicated by the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation.

51. Under MD. Ann. Code. Bus. Reg. § 7-401(a), a person may not willfully or knowingly do business as a collection agency unless properly licensed.

52. The Defendant is subject to the penalties imposed under MD. Ann. Code. Bus. Reg. § 7-401(b) for failure to obtain a license while doing business as collection agency in the state of Maryland and the Plaintiff is, therefore, entitled to damages.

COUNT V

COMMON LAW FRAUD

53. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

54. The acts, practices and conduct engaged in by the Defendant and complained of herein constitute fraud under the Common Law of the State of Maryland.

55. The Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer actual damages as a result of the foregoing acts and practices, including damages associated with, among other things, humiliation, anger, anxiety, fear, frustration and embarrassment caused by the Defendant.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff prays that judgment be entered against the Defendant:

1. Actual damages pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1) against the Defendant;

2. Statutory damages of \$1,000.00 pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(A) against the Defendant;
3. Costs of litigation and reasonable attorney's fees pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(3) against the Defendant;
4. Actual damages pursuant to MD. Code Comm. Law § 14-203;
5. Actual damages pursuant to MD. Ann. Code. Bus. Reg. § 7-401(b);
6. Actual damages from the Defendant for the all damages suffered as a result of the intentional, reckless, and/or negligent FDCPA violations and intentional, reckless, and/or negligent invasions of privacy in an amount to be determined at trial for the Plaintiff; and
7. Such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

TRIAL BY JURY DEMANDED ON ALL COUNTS

Dated: May 12, 2010

Respectfully submitted,

By /s/ Forrest E. Mays

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